

JUST A BUNCH OF BABIES

Andrea Hilty* AZ Lowdown editor * Lusaka, ZM

Tricia Huckaby * AZ Missionary * Lusaka, ZM

All of us at ACTION Zambia are rejoicing that Kelly and Tricia Huckaby have now made it through the arduous task of getting to Lusaka. They joined our team just a little over two months ago and I asked them to write up some of their first impressions of Lusaka and what God has been doing in their lives. Here is a little bit of perspective from a new missionary:

"So here we are at the two-month mark in Lusaka.

I could write almost endlessly about the differences in culture, food, language, and relational expectations. I could complain about the difficulties of learning to live on "Zambian time," or about always paying 25-50% above the average price for everything due to my obvious lack of melanin. But perhaps what has been the hardest thing to overcome is our own pride.

Jesus says in Matthew 18:3-4 (ESV), "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven." We had been living in a place where we were so effective, efficient, knowledgeable, skilful, and connected that we rarely felt like children. Two months in Zambia and it is all stripped away. We really are like children. We can hardly do anything by ourselves. We need someone to hold our hands through the bureaucracy, to show us how to speak and walk and BE. We babble like babies trying to learn Nyanja, and like babies we're greeted with delight and laughter at our inability to pronounce a half dozen sounds. We're lost half the time.

So here we are—trying to feel the graciousness of God as we are constantly humbled. And trying hard to keep from feeling humiliated. Maybe that's the difference between being humble and being humiliated—pride. If we can check our own pride we can be humbled; if we are still puffed up in our own abilities, strengths and powers we are humiliated when we fall short. So we continue to ask for your prayers as we seek to be (gently) humbled.

We also want to give thanks for our new truck (pictured)!! In the midst of policy changes for all NGOs and being faced with the possibility of having to pay an 85% excise tax on the truck, God worked a miracle in helping our team navigate the deep waters of Zambian bureaucracy and we have our truck tax free. However, when it comes to driving on the left side of the road and finding our way around this city, we're just a couple of babies.



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LEARNING THROUGH ADOPTION

*Elise Whitfield * AZ Missionary * Lusaka, ZM*

Adopting has been the most wonderful and most difficult thing we have ever done. It has stretched us in ways we never knew possible and shown us just a glimpse of how immense our Heavenly Father's love is for us. God's love is not dependent upon anything we do or who we are. God loves us in spite of our weakness, quirks and disabilities. He chose us, like we chose ChiChi.

Being born with water in his brain ChiChi had a rough beginning. His mother and twin died during childbirth, but God protected our little one. It's amazing to think that before time began God knew ChiChi would be our son. Despite a discouraging prognosis, ChiChi is growing and walking and learning. In addition to the improvements ChiChi is making, God is also improving and expanding our hearts.

Learning how to love in this new way has been a challenge for all of us. It has brought our entire family closer together unlocking doors of communication with our older children. I am so thankful for what God is teaching each

one of our 5 children through this whole process. I know God will use these lessons to shape each child into who He designed them to be!

God made us in His likeness and wants to commune with us! Everything that is in God's house is for us to enjoy, just like our adopted child learns in our home. He wants to bless us, comfort us, encourage us and guide us, but many times we don't fully allow ourselves to partake of what God our Father generously gives. We don't think we are deserving enough. But contrary to what we think the Bible says we are free to be intimate with our Heavenly Father and walk as His children. In Luke 15:31 (NKJV) our Father declares, "Everything I have is yours."

*"Love suffers long,
and is kind; ... love bears
all things, believes all things,
hopes all things, endures all
things. Love never fails."
1Corinthians 13:4-8 NKJV*



KILOMETRES FOR KIDS—UPDATE

*Stephanie Allen * AZ Missionary * Lusaka, ZM*

On August 29th six ACTION Zambia team members competed in the Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe Half and Full Marathons. Steve and Stephanie Allen, Brent and Kerri Roberts, and Luke and Elise Whitfield pounded the pavement, gravel, and dirt paths for a combined total of 168 kilometres. It was a wonderful weekend in that it brought to culmination many months of training and hard work. Running the race was an awesome experience, but the reason they were running was even more exciting!

The team ran to raise money for ACTION Zambia's Ciyanjano Centre. Ciyanjano is a property

ACTION Zambia is developing to provide camping and retreat opportunities for the children of Lusaka, as well as retreat opportunities for the pastors and churches with which AZ works.

The fundraiser, named "Kilometres for Kids" raised over \$9,000. All six runners all heartily agree that this race should be our FIRST annual "Kilometres for Kids". Plans are already underway for next year's race. Maybe you are a runner and are interested in this challenge? You have a year to plan and start training. Thank you to the many who joined us in this project!



Stephanie Allen, Elise Whitfield, Kerri Roberts

NOT JUST NUTRITION

Andrea Hilty * Lusaka, ZM

For some time now ACTION Zambia (AZ) has been financially partnering with a rural mission four hours south-east of Lusaka. AZ strongly believes in the work being accomplished in the Tonga Valley as the light of Christ is shining through the lives of local believers and the good deeds which flow from the truth of the Gospel.

Tim and I were able to travel and witness the baby nutrition program first-hand. As soon as we finished our breakfast there were mothers, grandmothers, aunts, fathers all gathered with their children to receive life-giving medical and food assistance.

Each patient was given time to talk through any concerns whether they were physical, spiritual, social or emotional. To illustrate this point, I sat in on one visit from a care-giver, father and two month old baby. The mother died in child-birth and as many tribal customs in Zambia dictate, a father is not considered a suitable care-giver. Thus, the task usually falls to an auntie. The purpose of this visit was not only to check up on the health of the baby

and distribute formula, it was also to open the lines of communication between father and auntie. Initially, both were quiet and appeared not to have discussed their expectations. As the conversation progressed detailing the father's continued role and the importance of supporting the care-giver of his child, the two began to relax. Relief at finally talking about the proverbial "elephant in the room" seemed to take the edge off and soon there were smiles and laughter. In addition, the father was allowed to feel the sorrow of his wife's passing as the difficulty of his situation was validated.

The picture to the left is of a grandmother who is caring for her orphaned grandchildren. She was given food and medicine for a month. They'll continue to receive help for 6 months at which time the children should be out of danger for malnutrition.



DEBRIEF AND RENEWAL

Karen Singleton * AZ Missionary * Lusaka, ZM

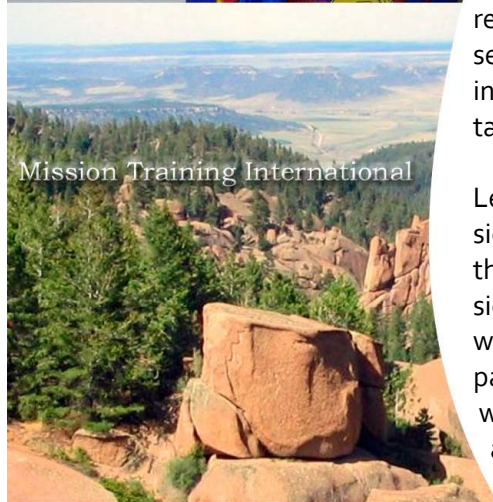
At the encouragement of ACTION Zambia's director, Tracy and I attended MTI, Missionary Training International, set in the Black Forest, north of Colorado Springs. MTI's retreat center's very name, The Hideaway, prepared us for what lay ahead. For five days our only responsibilities were to attend debriefing sessions, eat, rest, and enjoy the surrounding Colorado scenery~pine trees and mountains.

Led by George and Connie Blake, each session involved active participation by each of the five couples present. Going into the sessions Tracy was "afraid that the facilitators were going to question and probe me in painful ways that related to my own sin and weaknesses. What I found was a welcoming and affirming spirit that gave me the free-

dom to be honest about failures." Throughout the week Tracy and I had found a "safe place" where we could share some of our darkest thoughts.

When we started MTI, I (Karen) was returning to the field, but reluctantly. However, through the gentle guidance of the Blakes I came to see that God's call on my life required jumping in with both feet as opposed to having one foot in Zambia and one in the US.

We also enjoyed fellowship other missionaries. Brothers and sisters from all over the globe were present. During our group sessions we shared our stories, listened, and wept with one another. To be with others who "get it" ("it" being the missionary life), was a healing balm to our souls.



*Our ACTION
Zambia family is
growing!*

AZ GET-TOGETHER

*Tim Hilty * AZ Director * Lusaka, ZM*



With a ministry calendar full of events and activities, it can be difficult to connect meaningfully with the ministry colleagues one works with everyday. But I've often felt that it's the intimate knowledge of each other outside of "ministry work" that is such an important component to working successfully as a team. With that in mind, I organized an August get-together for the families of ACTION Zambia

missionaries, national staff and board members.

Everyone was invited to a cookout where meat by the kilo was sizzling on the open braai. Men, women and children reconnected, shared stories and relaxed with an afternoon of light-heartedness. It was so healthy to see the weight of ministry on our brows subside for a while.

Despite coming from a broad spectrum of cultural and life experience we shared much in common. I was particularly struck by how the Lord had brought each and every one of us together for His Kingdom work. We are all his workmanship together. All of our children present numbered in the dozens, evidencing God's activity through the generations. Praise God for the ACTION Zambia family!

COMMUNITY SCHOOLS—a look into a life

*Megan Bloemker * AZ Missionary * Lusaka, ZM*

The cheers of "go, go, go" are ringing through the class room as Fildes Chitanda and I race to complete a math problem on the chalkboard. This is a weekly occurrence in the grade 4 class room. When I am finished with my teacher training lesson, I peak my head in to see who is ready to try and beat "Auntie Megan" in a math problem of their choice.

There are some kids at the schools that are very special cases and Fildes Chitanda is one of them. You can see by her bright smile that she is full of life and loves being at school, but the reality is that Fildes is dying. She has a tumor in her body that is eating away at the muscles in her thigh and has spread up into her hips, lungs and brain. Her left leg is bent at a 90 degree angle and won't straighten out. She is forced to sit in a very awkward posi-

tion and hop on one leg around the classroom. Her spine has curved as a result of her posture. In spite of all her limitations, Fildes never misses school.



She lives about a half mile from the school and her grandmother carries her on her

back from home to school everyday. Last month I took her to the hospital and the doctor said that there was nothing that we could do to save her life, but to keep her comfortable. I purchased some crutches and she is now flying around the school. This little life is so precious and so wonderful that it breaks my heart to know that she has so many physical challenges to come.

This, unfortunately is the reality of doing work in the third world. Fildes is not the minority. There is so much suffering here, yet joy abounds. I keep watch over her to make sure that she is not in pain. Please pray for this little girl and the journey that lays before her.